

THE STORY
OF
NAOMI WISE

AND

THE HISTORY
OF
RANDLEMAN

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FOREWORD

The Rotary Club of Randleman compiled a History of Randleman in 1944. The History, together with a reprint of "The Story of Naomi Wise" and "Reminiscences of Randolph County" was published in the interest of preserving the early life of Randolph County, and as a club project.

Three years later it became necessary to reprint the book and the second edition was published.

Numerous requests have been received each year recently from people, locally and from outside North Carolina, for information as to where the book can be purchased. Once again as a club project, we have revised and published the information we have on our city.

We are grateful to all those people who contributed to our 1944 book and to those who have furnished information for this History.


THE ROTARY CLUB OF RANDLEMAN, N. C., 1962

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The story of Naomi Wise apparently made its first appearance in the Greensboro Patriot in April, 1874, written by Charles Vernon. It is believed that Dr. Braxton Craven, then President of Trinity College, used the pen name Charlie Vernon and it is the opinion that Dr. Craven wrote the original story of Naomi Wise.

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NAOMI WISE
1789 — 1808

GRAVE LOCATED AT PROVIDENCE FRIENDS MEETING,
EIGHT MILES NORTHEAST OF
RANDLEMAN, N. C.

NAOMI WISE

CHAPTER I

ABOUT 1800 there lived where New Salem now is, in the northern part of Randolph County, North Carolina, a very open and warm hearted gentleman by the name of William Adams. A few families of nature's noblest quality lived in the vicinity. They were not emphatically rich, but were what our people called good livers; they were honest, hospitable and kind; they knew neither the luxuries nor the vices of high life. Their farms supplied enough for their own tables, and surplus sufficient for a brisk trade with Fayetteville. The wild forest hills and immense glades in the neighborhood afforded bountiful quantities of game; whilst Deep River abounded with the finest fish. At that time the inhabitants were by no means so thickly settled as at present; trading as a regular business was unknown, except to a few merchants. The people were somewhat rude, still, however, hospitable and kind.

At William Adams' lived Naomi Wise. She had early been thrown upon the cold charity of the world, and she had received the frozen crumbs of that charity. Her size was medium; her figure beautifully formed; her face handsome and expressive; her eye keen yet mild; her words soft and winning. She was left without father to protect, mother to counsel, brothers and sisters to love, or friends with whom to associate. Food, clothing and shelter must be earned by the labor of her own hands, not such labor, however, as females at this day perform. There was no place for her but the kitchen with the prospect of occasionally going into the field. This the poor orphan accepted willingly; she was willing to labor, she was ashamed to beg. The thousand comforts that parents can find for their children are never enjoyed by the fatherless. Fanaticism may rave over the chains of the Africans; the pity of sixteen States can be poured out for the southern Negro; the great meetings are held to move on emancipation; but who pities the orphan? May the Lord pity him, for man will not.

At the time of which we speak, neighborhoods were nearly distinct; all that lived in the same vicinity, generally bearing the same name. To account for this, we have only to recollect, that most of our settlers migrated from Pennsylvania and Virginia; and that families generally came and settled together. Physical force being frequently necessary for self-defense, such families made a kind of treaty offensive and defensive. Sometimes, however, the most deadly feuds broke out among themselves. Such was the case with the Lewis family, that settled on Sandy Creek. Old David Lewis prob-

ably came from Pennsylvania; at least, an old gentleman by name of Buchanan told the writer so; Buchanan was personally acquainted with the Lewises. David had a considerable family of boys, all of whom were noted for their great size and strength. This was in every respect a very peculiar family, peculiar in appearance, in character, and in destiny. The Lewises were tall, broad, muscular and very powerful men. In the manner of fighting very common at that time, viz: to lay aside all clothing but pantaloons, and then try for victory by striking with the fist, scratching, gouging and biting, a Lewis was not to be vanquished. The family were the lions of the country. This character was eminently pugnacious. Nearly all of them drank to intoxication; aware of power, they insulted whom they listed; they sought occasions of quarrel as a Yankee does gold dust in California. They rode through plantations; killed their neighbors' cattle; took fish from other men's traps; said what they pleased; all more for contention than gain. Though the oppressed had the power, they were afraid to prosecute them; they knew these human hydras had no mercy; they dreaded their retaliating vengeance. For these men would follow their children while at work, and whip them from one side of the field to the other. They would compel them to stand in the yard during cold rainy nights, till the little creatures were frozen beyond the power of speech; and sometimes their wives shared no better fate. A fine colt belonging to Stephen Lewis, once did some trifling mischief, when the owner, enraged, shot it dead upon the instant. Anything, man or beast, that dared to cross them, periled its life. They neither sheltered themselves under the strong arm of law, nor permitted others to do so; they neither gave nor asked mercy. Yet these same men were unfailing friends, when they chose to protect. Their pledge was sure as anything human could be; if they threatened death or torture, those threatened always thought it prudent to retire to the very uttermost part of the earth; if they vowed protection, their protegee felt secure. Some of their remote relations are still in this country; they are among our most worthy citizens, but they never tamely submit to insult. Some inquire how such men as the Lewises could ever intermarry with other families; who would unite themselves to such cold hearted creatures?

While such characters are in some respects to be abhorred, yet there is about them that has in all ages been attractive. Ladies are accused, because they fall in love with fops, of wanting common sense, and of loving vanity rather than substance. The accusation is false. Except the love of a Christian for his Lord, the love of a

woman is the purest and truest thing on earth; sweet as the incense of heaven, soft as the air of paradise, and confiding as the lamb; it scorns the little, the vile and the treacherous. The tendrils of woman's affection despise the shrubs of odor and beauty to entwine closely and eternally around high forest trees that are exposed to howling storms and the thunders of Jove. The trees may be rough and crooked, but then they are trees. Find a man of great intellectual power, of iron will, of reckless daring, but of unshaken fidelity; in such you find a master magnet around which women's hearts collect by natural attraction. But how can a pure and good woman love a wicked man! Nonsense, thou puritan! She does not love his wickedness, but his soul. Did not the Saviour love a wicked world, though he died to destroy its wickedness? Then a woman will love a wicked man better than a good one, will she? No, she will love a good man much better, other things being equal. But you make daring deeds of wickedness the exponents of man's greatness. I do no such thing. I make actions that require power, energy, and firmness, test of greatness; that such actions should be tainted with evil, is a blot that mars them in no small degree; but still they are great actions, i.e., the products of powerful minds, there are certain philosophers in the world that would make all great actions cease to be great, when they ceased to be good; they would make their greatness directly as their goodness. These are evidently two different qualities, the one measuring the action per se, the other its moral character. Genuine love is as follows: woman loves the power which is able to support and protect, and if that power be good she will love it the more; man loves the gentle, confiding one that leans upon him with confidence and trusts him with her destiny; if she be good, he will love her the more. This may be grossly misconstrued; but fools will not see, and the wise can see our meaning, it is therefore plain enough.

We will hazard an axiom or two while on this point. No woman will or can really love a man who is intellectually her inferior. No man can love a woman that has not confidence in his fidelity and protection. If a powerful man be true to his wife, she being what she should, she will love him though he stains his hands in blood, and be guilty of the foulest deeds known in the catalogue of crime. But this is an unpardonable digression, let us return.

But few of the Lewises died natural deaths. Stephen Lewis was most unmerciful to his wife. He frequently whipped her with hobblerods, and otherwise abused her beyond endurance. Finally by aid of Richard, a brother of Stephen's, she escaped from home and

spent several months at an acquaintance's. Richard at length told Stephen that his wife would return if he would promise never more to abuse her. This he promised upon the word of a Lewis. He therefore told him to come to his house on a certain day, and he would find her. At the time appointed Stephen went, found his wife, and took her on his horse to convey her home. On the way, he made her tell the means of her escape, and the agents employed. The agent, as we have said, was his brother Richard. Stephen went home; kindly told his wife that he should henceforth treat her very kindly, but that he intended to shoot the scoundrel, Richard. Loading his gun, he immediately returned to his brother's. Richard happening to observe his approach and conjecting the object, fled upstairs with his gun. Stephen entered the house and enquired for Richard. Not learning from the family, and supposing him upstairs, he started up, and as his head came in view, Richard shot him, but did not kill him. Stephen was carried home and for a long time was unable even to sit up, still swearing, however, that when he recovered he would shoot Richard. His brother, knowing the threat would be executed, went to the house one day, and while Stephen was sitting on the bedside having his wounds dressed through a crack of the house Richard shot him through the heart. It is said that the manner of men's deaths frequently resembles their lives. The fate of the Lewises seems to confirm the fact. They were heartless tyrants while they lived, and as tyrants deserve, they died cruel and bloody deaths.

CHAPTER II.

. . . Like a love tyro
She grew to womanhood, and between whiles
Rejected several suiters, just to learn
How to accept a worse one in his turn.

—BYRON.

Naomi Wise was a lovely girl, just blooming in all the attractiveness of nineteen. Though serving as cook and sometimes as outdoor hand, she was the light of the family, and was treated better than such persons usually are. She was neatly dressed, rode to church on a fine horse and was the occasion of many youngsters visiting the house of Mr. Adams. Among those who frequently found it convenient to call at Mr. Adams' was Jonathan Lewis. His father, Richard Lewis, the same that shot Stephen, lived near Centre meeting-house, on Polecat Creek, in Guilford County. Jonathan was clerking for Benjamin Elliott, at Asheboro, in Randolph, and in passing from Centre to Asheboro, it was directly in his way to pass through New Salem. Jonathan, like the others of the same name, was a large, well built, dignified looking man. He was young, daring and impetuous. If he had lived in Scotland he would have been a worthy companion for Sir William Wallace or Robert Bruce; in England he would have vied with the Black Prince in coolness and bravery; in France he might have stood by the side of McDonald, in the central charge at Wagram; in our own revolution his bravery and power would, perhaps, have saved the day at Brandywine. He was composed of the fiercest elements; his wrath was like whirlwinds and scathing lightning; his smile like sunbeams bursting through a cloud, illumined every countenance upon which it fell. He never indulged in tricks or small sport, the ordinary pastimes of youth had no attraction for him. The smallest observation would teach us, that such men are capable of anything; once engaged they are champions in the cause of humanity; but once let loose, like unchained lions, they tear to pieces friends and foes. The greatest men are capable of being the greatest scourges. Leonidas was a rock upon which Persia broke, but some provocation might have made him a rock by which Greece would have been ground to powder. Dirk Hatteraik was a daring smuggler, that in a low, black lugger, defied the power of England; if the government had treated this man wisely, he might have been an admiral to eclipse Nelson. Our daring, headstrong boys are generally given over as worthless; and

here is the mistake; the world neither understands the mission nor management of such powerful minds. Bucephalus was pronounced a worthless animal by the whole court of Phillip. Alexander alone perceived his value and knew how to manage him; and in fact, Bucephalus was the greatest horse the world ever saw.

Jonathan Lewis saw Naomi Wise and loved her. She was the gentle, confiding, unprotected creature that a man like Lewis would love by instinct. Henceforward he was a frequent visitor at Adams'. The dark clouds that had so long hovered over the orphan were breaking away; the misty, dim vista of the future opened with clear light and boundless prospects of good; the fogs rolled away from the valley of life, and Naomi saw a pretty pathway bordered with flowers, and crossed only by little rills of purest water. Her young and guiltless heart beat with new and higher life; that she was loved by a man so powerful as Lewis, was sufficient recompence for a cheerless childhood. Day and night she labored to procure the indispensables of housekeeping; for in those days it was esteemed disreputable if a girl by the time she was twenty, had not made or earned for herself a bed, some chairs, pots, tubs, etc. And a young lady then modestly displayed her things to her lover, with as much care as modern misses display their paintings, needle-work, and acquirements on the piano. Instead of going to the piano, to the dance and other such latter day inventions, youngsters then went with the ladies to milk the cows, and display their gallantry by holding away the calves while the operation was performed; they then accompanied the damsels to the spring to put away the milk, and brought back a pail of water.

Time flew on, Lewis still continued as clerk, and had won the good opinion of his employer. Naomi was blooming in all the charms of early womanhood; her love for Lewis was pure and ardent; and the rumor was abroad that a marriage was shortly to take place. But an evil genius crossed the path of Lewis in the shape of his mother. Her ambition and avarice projected for her son a match of different character. She deemed it in the range of possibility that Jonathan might obtain the hand of Hettie Elliott, the sister of Benjamin Elliott, his employer. That mothers are ambitious everybody knows, and that they are the worst of matchmakers is equally well known. But Mrs. Lewis thought Miss Elliott a prize worthy an effort at least. The Elliotts were wealthy, honorable and in high repute. They have always stood high in this county, and citizens have delighted to honor them with public favor and private friendship. Mr. B. Elliott, Hettie's brother, evidently prized Lewis highly;

he regarded him as an honorable, intelligent and industrious young gentleman, and no doubt thought him a respectable match for his sister. Lewis made some advances to Hettie, which were received in such a way as to inspire hope. This was the turning tide in the fortunes of Lewis. The smile of one superior to Naomi Wise in every respect except beauty and goodness; the earnest exhortations of an influential mother; and the prospect of considerable property, bore down all obstacles. The pure love to Miss Wise, the native and genuine passion of his own heart, were not equal to a conflict with pride and avarice. Not but that Lewis, as any other man could and would love Miss Elliott. She was accomplished, beautiful, and of charming manners; an Elliott could not be otherwise. But these were not the attractions that won Lewis. Money, family connection, name and station, were the influences that clouded the fair prospects of innocence, opened the flood gates of evil, and involved all the parties concerned in ruin.

Tupper has wisely said that nothing in this world is single, all things are in pairs; and the perfection of earthly existence consists in properly pairing all the separate elements. Two elements properly adapted have a natural attraction, and firmly adhere amid all circumstances of prosperity or disaster; but two elements improperly mated repel each other with natural and undying repulsion in spite of circumstances or calculations. The young instinctively and naturally love those that would make them happy; but pride, family interference and coldhearted calculations often interpose; sordid considerations tear asunder the holiest chords of affection, and vainly attempt to thwart nature's own promptings. Lewis loved Miss Wise for herself; no selfish motive moved his heart or tongue; this would have been a union of peace and joy; he wished to marry Miss Elliott, not because he loved her, but influenced wholly by other and base considerations.

An old adage says, "The better anything is in its legitimate sphere, the worse it is when otherwise employed." Lewis no doubt would have been an honorable and useful man if he had married Naomi; he would then have been using the highest and strongest principle of human nature in a proper manner. In an evil hour he listened to the tempter, he turned aside from the ways of honor and truth. His eyes became blinded, conscience, the star of human destiny, lost her polarity, and the fierce storms drove his proud ship into the maelstrom of ruin. Jonathan Lewis was no more the proud, manly gentlemen; he was henceforth a hard hearted, merciless wretch. He was a hyena skulking about the pathway of life, ready

alike to kill the living, and to tear the dead from their graves. He not only resolved to forsake a lovely damsel, but first to ruin her fair name. His resolve was accomplished. He might have foreseen that this would ruin his prospects with the beautiful Miss Elliott; but the "wicked are blind and fall into the pit their own hands have digged." There are many young men now moving in high society, that think violets were created to be crushed by haughty boot heels; that desert flowers should rather be blasted than waste their sweetness on the air; that pearls should rather adorn a Cyclops, than sparkle in their native deep. Not so, yet cannibals. If names must be blasted and characters ruined, in the name of heaven, let your victims come from among the affluent and the honorable. Who will pity and protect the poor daughter of shame; who will give her a crumb of bread? The more wealthy victim might, at least have bread to eat, water to drink and wherewithal to be clothed. Ye fair, blooming daughters of poverty, shun the advances of those who avoid you in company, as you would shun the grim monster death.

Lewis, aware that a period was approaching that would mar all his hopes, unless they should immediately be consummated, urged his suit with all possible haste. Miss Elliott, however, baffled him on every tack, and, though she encouraged him, gave him but little hope of succeeding immediately. In the meanwhile, Naomi urged the fulfilment of his promise, that he would marry her forthwith, seconded by the power of tears and prayers. When these means seemed unavailing, she threatened him with the law. Lewis, alarmed at this, charged her, at peril of life, to remain silent; he told her that their marriage was sure, but that very peculiar circumstances required all to be kept silent. But before he could bring matters to an issue with Miss Elliott, rumor whispered abroad the engagement and disgrace of Naomi Wise. This rumor fell like thunder upon Lewis; the depths of a dark but powerful soul were awakened, his hopes were quivering upon a balance which the next breath threatened with ruin. With a coolness and steadiness which innocence is wont to wear, Lewis affirmed to Miss Elliott that said rumor was a base, malicious slander, circulated by the enemies of the Lewis family, to ruin his character, and offered that time, a very fair arbiter, should decide upon the report, and if adjudged guilty, he would relinquish all claim to her, Miss Elliott's hand.

For several days Lewis was apparently uneasy, appeared abstracted, neglected his business, and was not a little ill. Mr. Elliott assigned one cause, Miss Elliott another, but the true one was unknown to anyone. The kingdom was in commotion, dark deeds were

in contemplation, and at length the die was cast. Mrs. Adams had frequently of late told Naomi, that Lewis did not intend to marry her, that he was playing a game of villiany, and that she should place no further confidence in any of his assertions; but the poor girl thought or hoped differently; she could not and would not believe Jonathan Lewis was untrue. Woman's love cannot doubt. Lewis at length came to see Miss Wise, and told her that he wished not to delay the marriage any longer; that he had made all necessary arrangements, and that he would come and take her to the house of a magistrate on a certain day. She urged the propriety of the marriage taking place at the house of Mr. Adams; but he refused and she without much reluctance consented to his wishes. Time sped on, the last morn rolled up the eastern vault in his chariot, dispensing light and joy to millions; Naomi walked forth with light heart and step, thinking only of her coming nuptials. During the day in the midst of her anticipations, gloomy forebodings would disturb her. Like the light breeze preceding the storm, they seemed to come and go without cause. So true is it;

"That coming events cast their shadows before." She told nothing of what was about to take place to Mr. Adams; but at the appointed time taking the water pail in her hand, she went to the spring, the place at which she agreed to meet Lewis. He soon appeared and took her behind him. It is said that the stump off which Naomi mounted remains to this day, and may be seen by anyone who will visit New Salem.

The last lone relic of Naomi's love,
A speaking monument of a wretch's heart;
Like love, its grasp time scarce can move,
Like treachery, corruption lurks in every part.

The strong steed bore Naomi rapidly from the home of her childhood and youth; from the kind Mrs. Adams that was wont to sooth in every trouble.

CHAPTER III.

Naomi very soon perceived that they were not approaching the magistrate, by whose mystic knot sorrow was to be killed and joy born; but to her great surprise, Lewis kept the direct road to the river, speaking to her in the meantime with rather a strange voice and an incoherent manner. She tried to imagine his object, but she was convinced that he would not take her to Asheboro, and she knew of no magistrate in that direction; every effort therefore failed to give her troubled mind any peace. Slackening his pace to a slow walk, Lewis and Naomi held the following conversation.

"Naomi, which do you think is easiest, a slow or sudden death?"

"I'm sure I don't know, but what makes you ask me that question?"

"Why, I was just thinking about it. But which would you prefer, if you could have choice?"

"I would try to be resigned to whatever Providence might appoint, and since we cannot have a choice, it is useless to have any preferences."

"Well, Naomi, do you think you would like to know the time when you are to die?"

"Why, Jonathan, what do you mean by such questions? I have never thought of such matters; and I am sure, I never knew you to be mentioning such things before."

Lewis rode on for some time without making any reply; seeming in a deep reverie; but in fact in the most intense excitement; at length he remarked:

"Well, Naomi, I believe I know both the time and manner of your death, and I think it is in my power to give you a choice."

This ran through the poor girl like a dart of death; it was some minutes before she could make any reply.

"For the Lord's sake, Jonathan, what do you mean; do you intend to kill me, or why do you talk so?"

"I will never harm you; we shall be married in two hours. As you see, I am not going to———— as I first intended, but am going across the river, where we shall have a nice wedding."

"Jonathan, I'm afraid everything is not right, and I feel so bad this evening, I had rather go home and put it off till another day."

"No, no, that will not do. I tell you again, you need not fear anything. Just be perfectly contented, and fear no harm from him that loves you better than himself."

They were now on a high bluff that commanded an extensive

view of the river and the country beyond. The bold, rocky channel of the stream was distinctly visible for a great distance to the south-east; whilst from the northwest came the river, now swollen by recent rains, roaring and rumbling over rocky ledges, and then moving calmly away. A blue crane was flying slowly above the bed of the stream, whilst amid the dwarf pines and cedars that grew upon the crags, many ravens were cawing and screaming. This scenery, heightened by the dusk of evening, strongly impressed Naomi's mind. She remarked to Lewis:

"I am almost afraid to be in this lonely place; I wish we were away. O! how happy I should be, if we had a quiet home like yon from which that smoke is rising away over the hills. It may be foolishness, Jonathan, but I want you to be careful in going down these banks and crossing the river. I have so often feared something would happen to prevent the happiness we expect; and I am sure I never felt so bad in my life."

Lewis reined up his horse, stopped for a short time, then started forward, muttering, "I will though; I am a coward." Miss Wise asked him what he was saying; he replied that he only meant that they should be married that night. The river was here tolerably wide and below the ford some little turf-islands covered with alders and willows, made several sluices. Lewis rushed his horse in the water, which came up to his sides, and plunged forward rapidly till he reached the middle of the channel, then stopping his beast and turning himself in the saddle, he said to Naomi in a husky voice: "Naomi I will tell you what I intend to do; I intend to drown you in this river; we can never marry. I found I could never get away from you, and I am determined to drown you."

"O! Jonathan, Jonathan," screamed the victim, "you do not, cannot mean what you say; do not terrify me so much and make haste out of here."

"I mean," said Lewis, "just what I say; you will never go from here alive. You cannot move me by words or tears; my mind is fixed; I swear by all that's good or bad, that you have not five minutes to live. You have enticed me to injure my character, you have made me neglect my business. You ought never to have been such a fool as to expect that I would marry such a girl as you are. You did not expect that I was taking you off to marry you, when you got up behind me; you no doubt thought I would take you to Asheboro, and keep you there as a base——. Prepare to die."

"My Lord, what shall I do?" said Naomi, "You know I have loved you with my whole soul; I have trusted you, and when you

betrayed me, I never reviled you. How often did I tell you that you did not intend to marry me! How many times did I beseech you to be honest with me! And after all, you certainly will not drown me. O, Jonathan, for heaven's sake take me out of this river! Do, O do. O, spare my life! I will never ask you to marry me, I will leave the country, I will never mention your name again, and"—

Lewis stopped short her entreaties by grasping her throat with his left hand; her struggles immediately threw them both from the horse. Being a tall, strong man, he held her above the water until he tied her dress above her head, and then held her under beneath his foot until he was alarmed by a glare of torches approaching along the road he had just come. He mounted his horse and dashed out of the river on the south side.

Mrs. Davis lived at no great distance from the river, and had heard the death screaming of poor Naomi. She had heard the startling cry as the villain caught her by the throat; then she heard the wild wail when she arose from the water, and lastly the stifled sob as she was muffled in her dress. The old lady called her boys and bid them hasten to the ford, that somebody was murdered or drowned; but they were afraid to go; they hesitated and parlied; at last they set out with glaring torches, but it was too late. They arrived only in time to hear the murderer leaving the opposite bank. They neither saw nor heard Naomi. She was already dead, her last scream had died away, her last gasping groan had arisen through the rippling waters, and her body was floating amid the willows of a turf-island. A pure and beautiful damsel, she attracted the admiration of a cold-hearted world without gaining its respect; her pathway had been waylaid by those who thought poor, unprotected beauty bloomed only to be blasted. Her pure and ardent affections having never enjoyed the sunshine of love were ready to grasp the first support that offered. She had given her heart to a deceiver; she had trusted her life to a destroyer, and the murmuring waves that now bathed her lifeless form, and rocked her on their cold bosom, were the only agents, perhaps, that had ever acted towards her without selfishness.

Early on the next morning the people of her home were searching in all directions for Naomi. Mrs. Adams had passed a sleepless night; a strange impression had instantly fixed itself upon her mind as soon as Naomi was missed; and in her broken slumbers during the night, she was aroused by sometimes imagining that Naomi called her, at other times by dreaming that she saw her dead, and

again by thinking she heard her screaming. At early dawn she aroused the vicinity, and going to the spring, the tracks of a horse were readily discovered and by the sign it was evident that Naomi had mounted from the stump. The company followed the track until Mrs. Davis and her boys were met coming in haste to tell the circumstances of the preceding evening. The old lady told the crowd of the screaming she had heard; that the boys had gone down with the lights and heard a horseman galloping from the opposite bank.

"Ah!" said the old lady, "murder's been done, sich unyearthly screams can't come of nothing; they made the hair rise on my head, and the very blood curdle in my heart. No doubt poor Naomi's been drowned. O! ef I had been young as I once was, I would a run down there and killed the rascal afore he could a got away! What is the world a coming to?"

The company hastened to the river, and in a few moments discovered the body still muffled in the clothing. She was quickly borne to the shore and laid upon a rock; upon the fair neck of the dead were still to be seen the marks of the ruffian's fingers. The Coroner was sent for, the jury summoned, and the verdict pronounced, "Drowned by violence." Some one of the vast crowd now assembled, suggested that Lewis should be sought and brought to the corpse ere it was interred. This was assented to by acclamation, but who would do it? Who would dare to apprehend a LEWIS? A firm, brave officer of Randolph accepted the task, and having selected his company from the numerous candidates, for every youth on the ground offered, proceeded to Asheboro.

So soon as Lewis saw the lights coming while he was at his work of death, as above said, he dashed out of the river, having no doubt that the water would bear the body into the deep pools below the ford, and render discovery impossible. We have seen that in this he was disappointed. Leaving the river, he rode rapidly around to another ford, and hastened to his father's near Centre meeting house. He dashed into the room where his mother was sitting, and asked for a change of clothes. The old lady, alarmed, asked him why he came at that time of week (for he usually came on Sunday), why he was wet, and why he looked so pale and spoke in such a strange voice. He replied that he had started home on some business, and that his horse had fallen with him in the river, and that his wet clothes made him look pale and altered in his voice. His mother had too much sagacity to believe such a tale, but she could obtain from him no other explanation. Having procured

a change of apparel, he departed and arrived at Asheboro early next morning. Riding up to Col. Craven's he called at the door. Mrs. Craven answered the call, and exclaimed in astonishment:

"What's the matter, Lewis, what have you been doing, have you killed 'Omi Wise?"

Lewis was stunned; raising his hand and rubbing his eyes, he said:

"Why what makes you ask me that question?"

"No particular reason," said Mrs. Craven, "only you look so pale and wild; you don't look at all like yourself this morning."

Lewis made no reply, but the flushed countenance which he exhibited would have afforded no small evidence to a close observer that something was wrong. So true is it "That the wicked flee when no man pursueth." Leaving Asheboro, Lewis went to a sale at a Mr. Hancock's at a place now owned by Thomas Cox. During the day it was remarked by many that Jonathan Lewis had a cast countenance by no means usual. Instead of that bold; daring independence that was usual to him, he seemed reserved, downcast and restless. By indulging freely in drink, which was always to be had on such occasions, he became more like himself toward evening; and even ventured to mingle with the ladies. For it should be observed that in those days, the ladies attended vendues, elections, musters, etc., without derogation to their characters. And in very many places, a young man showed his gallantry by collecting the fair ones whom he would honor and conducting them to some wagon, where his liberality was displayed by purchasing cakes, cider, etc. Let it not be supposed that this custom was confined to the low or vulgar, for the practice was well nigh universal. Our lady readers must not think it beneath their dignity to read of such characters, for our mothers, and perhaps theirs also, have received such treats. Lewis on the occasion above named, seemed particularly attracted by Martha, the daughter of Stephen Huzza. After waiting upon her according to the manner of the times, Lewis accompanied her home. The manner of courting at that day was very different from what now prevails; the custom then was, for the young people to remain in the room after the old people retired, then seat themselves beside each other, and there remain until 12 or 1 o'clock. Lewis had taken his seat and drawn Martha into his lap; rather a rude move even at that time, and not a little contrary to Martha's will—when a gentle rap was heard at the door. While the inmates were listening to hear it repeated, the door opened, and Robert Murdock, the brave officer who had pursued Lewis, entered, at-

tended by a retinue that at once overawed the unarmed murderer. He suffered himself to be quietly arrested and taken back to the river bank where his victim still remained. He put his hand upon her face, and smoothed her hair, apparently unmoved. So greatly was the crowd incensed at this hard-hearted audacity, that the authority of the officer was scarcely sufficient to prevent the villain's being killed upon the spot. The evidence against Lewis, though circumstantial, was deemed conclusive. The foot-prints from the stump to the river exactly fitted his horse; hairs upon the skirt on which she rode were found to fit in color; a small piece torn from Lewis' accoutrement fitted both rent and texture; his absence from Asheboro, and many other minuter circumstances all conspired to the same point. In proper form he was committed to jail in Asheboro to await his trial. A vast company on the next day attended the remains of Naomi to the grave. The whole community mourned her untimely death; the aged wiped the falling tear from their wrinkled faces; the young men stood there in deep solemnity, and sighed over the fair one now pale in death; many, very many, maidens wept over betrayed and blasted innocence, and all were melted in grief, when the shroud hid the face of Naomi forever.

The writer knows not the place of her grave, else would he visit that lonely place; he would place at her head a simple stone to tell her name, her excellence and her ruin; he would plant there appropriate emblem, and drop a tear over the memory of her who sleeps beneath.

"Oh! far as the wild flower, close to thee growing,
How pure was thy heart till love's witchery came,
Like the wind of the South o'er a summer lute blowing
It hushed all its music and withered its fame,
The young village maid, when with flowers she dresses
Her dark flowing hair for some festival day,
Will think of thy fate till neglecting her tresses
She mournfully turns from the mirror away."

CHAPTER IV.

Though Lewis was confined in the strong jail that then towered in Asheboro as a terror to evildoers, his was not the character to yield without an effort; and such was his strength, skill or assistance, that he soon escaped. He broke jail and fled to parts unknown. Time rolled on, bearing upon its ever changing surface new scenes, actions and subjects of thought. Naomi was beginning to fade from memory, and Lewis was scarcely thought of. The whole tragedy would, perhaps, have been nearly in the sea of oblivion, but for the song of "Omi Wise," which was sung in every neighborhood. At length, rumor, the persecutor and avenger, gave tidings that Jonathan Lewis was living at the falls of Ohio, was married, had one child, and considered in prosperous circumstances. The murdered girl rose fresh in the minds of the people. Justice cried "Cut the sinner down." Indignation cried shame to the lingering servants of law. Col. Craven, Col. Lane and George Swearengain, properly commissioned, started in quest of the criminal. Many were the sighs and expressions of anxieties that escaped their friends, when these worthy citizens departed. All were aware that the enterprise was perilous. Most of the Lewis family had migrated to the same region, and one Lewis was not trifled with, much less a community of such personages. But brave men, especially of Randolph County, sustained by justice, never count the foe, or ask a parley. Having arrived in the neighborhood, or rather in the country, for they were yet many miles from Lewis' home, they made inquiry until they found the circumstances and position of the families. Knowing that if they appeared in person their object would be defeated, they hired two sturdy hunters for a fee of seventy-five dollars to take Jonathan, dead or alive, and deliver him at a certain town. "No work, no pay." The three officers went to the town to await the issue, and if it failed, to collect if possible, such force as might be necessary to wage civil war upon the whole offending tribe.

The hunters, unknown to the Lewises, having arrived in the immediate vicinity, learned that a great dance was to take place that night at a house in the neighborhood, and that all the Lewises would be there. They concluded that the occasion would either enable them to execute their object, or at least to make some useful observations; they accordingly rode to the place, in appearance and profession two wandering backwoodsmen. Arriving at the rude fence in front of the house, and seeing a considerable number already collected, one of the hunters cried:

"Hello to the man of the house and all his friends."

"Hello back to you," said a voice within, "and maybe you'd light and look at your saddle."

"Apt as not," said the hunter, "if we're allowed to see our saddles on the peg, our horses eatin' fodder, and ourselves merry over hog and hominy."

"Ef you are what you look like," said the landlord, stepping into the yard, "and not Yankee speculators, nor bamboozled officers, nor Natchez sharpers, you are welcome to sich as we have."

"And spose we are not what we look like," replied the hunter, "what then?"

"Why, the sooner you move your washing, the better; we're plain honest folks here, and deal with all scatterlopers arter their deserts."

"Well, well, we'll light and take some of your pone and a little of your blinkeye, and maybe as how we'll get better acquainted."

So saying, the strangers alighted, and having seen their horses supplied with a bountiful quantity of provender, they entered the house and mingled with the guests without exciting suspicion, or even much notice. They had previously agreed, that one should do the talking, lest they might commit some incongruities. A glance convinced them that Jonathan Lewis was not there. The guests continued to assemble, women, men, and children; an old wrinkled-faced vagabond commenced tuning his violin, and the parties were arranging themselves for the dance, when a strong powerful man entered. His hair was long, bushy and matted as if it had never known the virtue of a comb; his eyebrows were dark and heavy; his step was decided and firm; he wore a belted hunting shirt in the band of which hung a long, double-edged hunting knife, and under its folds were plainly visible two heavy pistols. His keen eye detected the strangers instantly, and forthwith he sought the landlord at the other end of the house, and engaged him for a time in whispers. Our hunters knew their man, and watched him with no small anxiety, nor was it long until he approached them and said:

"I reckon you're strangers in these parts."

"I reckon we are too, being we know nobody and nobody knows us; and we're perlight enough not to trouble strangers with foolish questions, and so I guess we shall still be strangers."

This answer to his implied question evidently displeased the interrogator; after eyeing them a moment, he continued,

"But maybe we all come from the same land, and so might scrape an acquaintance easier than you think."

"As to that, it's no difference, without telling or asking names, we give the right hand to every honest hunter."

"Then we're hunters, I spose, and as we have a great deer hunt tomorrow, perhaps you'll join."

"That we will, if it's agreeable."

The dance passed off without anything remarkable, and early next morning the horns were sounding, the dogs yelping and everything alive for the hunt. In arranging the couples to stand at the crosses, it so happened that Jonathan and our talking hunter were stationed together, and the other stranger at no great distance. The drivers had departed, and the marksmen were reclining at ease or examining their firelocks when Jonathan discovered that he had no powder. As it would probably be an hour or two before the game would appear, Lewis proposed to his companion that they should go to the village and supply themselves with powder. They had no sooner started than the other hunter discovered his comrade to give the signal, he accordingly followed at some distance in the rear. Close by the village he met Lewis and his companion on their return. The hunters exchanged signs and agreed to make the effort; they were fully aware of their peril; for though two against one, they knew their antagonist to be much more powerful than either, and to be well armed. The hunter that met them pretended that he had become alarmed when he missed them, not knowing what might happen, and that he had come in search; then asking about the powder, requested to see some. While Lewis was pouring some into his hand, the other seized him from behind in order to hold his hands fast; while the front man grasping him by the legs, endeavored to throw him. Like a second Sampson, Lewis tore his arms from the grasp of the hunter, and with a back-handed blow sent him near a rod backwards, at the same time kicking down the man that was before him. But before he could level his gun the first hunter gave him such a blow with the barrel of his gun that he reeled and fell; but pointing his gun as the second hunter came, he would have shot him dead, if the other had not struck his arm; the flash of the gun, however, set fire to the powder, that in the melee, had been spilled upon the hunter's clothes and scorched the whole company not a little. Lewis, better capable of enduring such catastrophes than the others, taking advantage of the confusion, would have made his escape, had not the villagers arrived in sufficient strength to overpower him by force of numbers.

Col. Craven and his companions received Lewis bound with strong cords and immediately started for Carolina, nor did they

travel at a moderate rate, well knowing that if the Lewis family with their confederates should overtake them, death would be the fate of the weaker party; nor did the hunters tarry in the vicinity, but hurried themselves far away in the western wilds. After Lewis found that further resistance would be useless, he seemed to submit to his fate and become tractable and social, so much so, that his hands were somewhat slackened and his captivity less strict. He awakened no suspicion by asking them to be less cautious, and seemed so much more social than they had ever known him, that his guards were almost tempted to free him from all restraint. One evening, while indulging their glee around the campfire, Lewis, unobserved, untied his bonds, and springing up, darted off with the agility of a youth. Craven and Swarengain pursued, but Craven was ere long left some distance in the rear. They were now in a low bottom and the evening had so far advanced that Swarengain, who was close in pursuit, could only see Lewis by the whiteness of his clothes. So expert was Lewis in dodging that he constantly eluded the grasp of his pursuer and was now within a few paces of a dense thicket, Swarengain making a spring, struck Lewis with a blow so effectual that it felled him to the earth, and before he could regain his feet, he was overpowered by both his pursuers.

Lewis was finally brought to Randolph, from which county his trial was moved to Guilford, where he was finally tried and acquitted. Most of the material witnesses had died or moved away, and much of the minutae was forgotten. After his release he returned to Kentucky, and died a few years afterwards. After all hopes of his discovery was given up, and his friends watched around his couch only to perform the last sad offices of life, he still lingered. He seemed to suffer beyond human conception; the contortions of his face were too horrid for human gaze; his groans were appalling to the ear. For two days the death rattle had been in his throat, and yet he retained his reason and speech. Finally he bid every person leave the room but his father, and to him he confessed all the circumstances we have detailed. He declared that while in prison Naomi was ever before him; his sleep was broken by her cries for mercy, and in the dim twilight her shadowy form was ever before him, holding up her imploring hands. Thus ended the career of Jonathan Lewis, for no sooner was his confession completed than his soul seemed to hasten away.

The following is the song so well known in this county as:

POOR NAOMI

Come all you good people, I'd have you draw near.
A sorrowful story you quickly shall hear;
A story I'll tell you about N'omi Wise,
How she was deluded by Lewis' lies.

He promised to marry and use me quite well;
But conduct contrary I sadly must tell,
He promised to meet me at Adams' Springs,
He promised me marriage and many fine things.

Still nothing he gave but yet flattered the case,
He says we'll be married and have no disgrace,
Come get up behind me, we'll go up to town,
And there we'll be married, in union be bound.

I got up behind him and straightway did go
To the banks of Deep River, where the water did flow;
He says, "Now, Naomi, I'll tell you my mind,
I intend to drown you, and leave you behind."

O! pity your infant and spare me my life;
Let me go rejected and not be your wife.
"No pity, no pity," this monster did cry,
"In Deep River's bottom your body shall lie."

The wretch then did choke her, as we understand,
And threw her in the river, below the milldam.
But it murder or treason, Oh! what a great crime
To murder poor Naomi and leave her behind.

Naomi was missing, they all did well know,
And hunting for her to the river did go;
And there found her floating on the water so deep,
Which caused all the people to sigh and to weep.

The neighbors were sent for to see the great sight,
While she lay floating all that long night,
So early next morning the inquest was held,
The jury correctly the murder did tell.

NOTE: It is said that in the dusk of evening, the following little song may be heard about the river in accents sweet as angels sing:

Beneath these crystal waters,
 A maiden once did lie,
 The fairest of earth's daughters,
 A gem to deck the sky.
 In caves of pearly enamel,
 We weave a maiden's shroud
 For all the foolish damsels,
 That dared to stray abroad.

We live in rolling billows
 We float upon the mist,
 We sing on foaming pillows:
 "Poor Naomi of the past."

NAOMI WISE—

In Minute Book—Pleas and Quarter Sessions 1811-1815.

February Term 1815

(Copied.) "Ordered of the Court that the County Trustees pay the cost and charges of attorneys. The prosecution of Jonathan Lewis for felony when trial is removed to the County of Guilford to the said Jonathan Lewis there requested and said discharged from jail under the insolvent Debtors Act."

"The Claims for the said cost charges appearing to be in the manner prescribed by the act of Assembly, to wit:—

Here follows the names of witnesses:

Elizabeth Craven	Hettie Ramseur	Mary Adams
William Dennis	Joseph Dougan	Joshua Davis
William Davis	Eli Pennington	William Watkins
Eli Powell	Robert Murdock	John Craven
Obed Anthony	George Adams	Bob Wall
Wm. Dobson	Col. Benjamin Elliott	Ann Conoy
Ann Davis	Samuel Elliott	Joseph Elliott

This court procedure was after Lewis had been brought from the West for trial charged with drowning Naomi Wise in 1808. The trial was removed to the County of Guilford and all the evidence being circumstantial, Jonathan Lewis was set free and left the state. That he was guilty of the act has never been doubted.

1808—The Grand Jury reported that one prisoner was confined in the jail charged with murder. Jonathan Lewis made his escape

supposedly with the aid of sympathetic friends and a shackley frame jail from which his escape could easily be made, however, considering the heavy guard placed by Col. Elliott it is easy to believe that friends of the accused Lewis aided in his escape.

In the minds of a great many in this present day exists the doubt of the story of Naomi Wise, it is regarded as a fable manufactured to add color and pathos to the Ballad of Naomi Wise, therefore, these authentic court records attached are a positive proof that such a stark tragedy did take place in the year 1808 and that in 1815 the court freed Lewis as the evidence was entirely circumstantial.

In the August term of court, 1808, Benjamin Elliott came before the subscribing justices and made oath that he was the officer called by the Lt. Col. Commander of said county to guard the gaol of said county for the safe keeping of Jonathan Lewis, a state prisoner, confined therein on the charge of murder and that he attended on that business thirty days and that the under named persons attended as soldiers as follows:

Joshua Craven	22 days	John Barton	5 days
Daniel Davidson	29 days	Enoch Davis	3 days
Henry Craven	7 days	William Newby	3 days
Joel Craven	6 days	Ransom Davis	3 days
Edison Wood	18 days	Fredreck Dawson	6 days
		Absalom Harvey	4 days

Sworn to and subscribed to before me November 11, 1808.

B. ELLIOTT, Captain.



MAIN STREET, 1962

THE HISTORY OF RANDLEMAN begins with the founding of the Dicks Grist Mill by Peter Dicks in 1800. The settlement was then known as Dicks. Peter Dicks himself was a farmer and operated a general store in the village of New Salem. He served in many public affairs, the most important of which was probably his assistance in the founding of the county of Randolph. He served as clerk of the court of equity and also served as commissioner, or justice. He was an ardent Quaker and was one of the founders of the New Garden Boarding School, which is known to us today as Guilford College. He was also a minister of the Society of Friends and overseer of the Center Monthly Meeting.

Peter Dicks was the head of a large family and a number of his survivors still live in this section of the county. He died in 1843, five years before the first cotton mill was built. It has been said that Peter Dicks laid the cornerstone for the city of Randleman.

By 1848 more settlers had come and the Union Factory was built, causing the community to change its name to Union. During this formative period two men were outstanding in the development of the community—John Banner Randleman and John H. Ferree. These men had purchased the Union Factory, changed its name to the Randleman Manufacturing Company, and had been instrumental in starting the Naomi Mills.

John Banner Randleman was born in Stokes County, September 11, 1827, in the part of Stokes County which is now in Forsyth. He went into cotton mill work when he was 17 years of age and after working at different positions in several mills he became the superintendent of the High Falls Cotton Mill. He moved here in 1868 and purchased the Union Factory and achieved an enviable record among the cotton manufacturing interests of that day. A number of important names have been recorded and credited with the growth of Randleman during the last 75 years, and certainly the credit for the early manufacturing enterprises goes to John Banner Randleman. He died in 1879 and is buried in St. Paul's Methodist Church cemetery.

In 1880 the General Assembly at Raleigh granted papers of incorporation to the City of Randleman, named for John Banner Randleman. The following was copied from an old record in the state capital:

"Laws of North Carolina begun and heed in the city of Raleigh on Monday the 15th of March, A.D. 1880. Special Session of

General Assembly.

"An Act to incorporate the town of Randleman Mills in the county of Randolph is hereby created and incorporated a town and John H. Ferree, James E. Walker, James O. Pickard, Romulus R. Ross, Addison W. Vickory and their successors are hereby created a body politic under the style of "The Commissioners of the Town of Randleman Mills" to have perpetual succession with the usual power of such corporations to sue and be sued, to plead and be impleaded, contract and be contracted with and to make all needful rules, regulations, by-laws and ordinances for the government of said town not inconsistent with the Constitution and by-laws of the State and the United States.

"Ratified this the 29th day of March, A.D., 1880."

The small town thrived, and by 1890 was the largest town in Randolph County. The coming of the High Point, Randleman, Asheboro and Southern Railroad in 1889 had greatly facilitated this growth, because roads were none too good and the railroad assured the town of quicker handling of freight. During this time three more mills came into being—Randleman Hosiery Mills, Plaidville Mills and Marie Antoinette. Randleman Hosiery Mills was the first hosiery mill in Randolph County.

The Union Factory was burned to the ground in 1885 but was immediately rebuilt and the community was referred to in 1890 in Blair's "Reminiscences" as having "grown into a flourishing town, and ranks among the leading manufacturing centers of the State."

The High Point, Randleman, Asheboro & Southern Railroad was completed in July, 1889. In its early days the influence of this railroad played an important part in the development of Randleman and other sections of Randolph County.

The cotton manufacturing plant of Naomi Falls was built in 1879 near the spot where Jonathan Lewis drowned the beautiful Naomi Wise about the year 1808. The mills at Naomi Falls and Randleman were consolidated and the two communities were incorporated as the City of Randleman on March 15, 1880, in a special session of the General Assembly in Raleigh.

We quote Blair's "Reminiscences" once again: "These are some of the monuments erected by the noble pioneers of civilization. Their founders are gone. Their names are forgotten, but their influence is still seen and felt and tongue and pen and utterance in fitting tribute will embalm their memories in song and story, and while freedom has a votary, or truth a friend, their praise will be more enduring than the crown of the Caesars."

The first church to be built in Randleman was the Mt. Lebanon Methodist Protestant in 1850. In 1855 a Methodist Episcopal church was organized, called St. Paul. In order that the people on the other side of town could be conveniently served in 1883 Naomi Methodist church was organized. These two churches merged in 1944 and are now the First Methodist church. A landmark in the history of the town was the Randleman Store Company, the town's first store, which still operates. An interesting item listed in one of the old ledgers in 1848 was the sale of 53 lbs. of beef for \$1.32. The Bank of Randleman was organized in 1900 with Stanhope Bryant president and was consolidated with the Peoples Bank in 1910. Randleman continued to grow and prosper with the coming of new mills, stores, and businesses in the early part of the century.

Immediately surrounding the corporate limits of the city of Randleman are a number of small communities which have influenced the growth of the city due to their interest and participation in the school, church, civic and social life. Probably the most important of these communities are Brown's Cross Roads, formerly known as Johnsonville, and Sophia, which are just to the northwest of Randleman; Worthville to the southeast, Level Cross to the north, and New Salem to the northeast. In spite of the fact that the history of Randleman dates back to about the year 1800, there are certain historical records that point out the fact that the New Salem community and Johnsonville were both in existence at the time what is now Randleman was started when Peter Dicks established his grist mill soon after the turn of the nineteenth century.

Just a short distance to the northeast of Randleman lies the community of New Salem. This community would probably have developed into what is now equal to the city of Randleman had it not been for the great influence which Deep River and its low cost water power played in developing the earliest textile plants. New Salem was noted in its early days as having been the home of many well-to-do families, many of them having been instrumental in starting the textile plants which were later built along Deep River below where Randleman now stands. Apparently there were no productive industries ever started in the town, and the good people of this community took occupations in the textile plants on Deep River. About 1800 New Salem was second only to Johnsonville, now known as Brown's Cross Roads, in business and population, and the beautiful community stands today, we imagine, very much as it did one hundred and fifty years ago.

Johnsonville (now known as Brown's Cross Roads) was the first

county seat of Randolph County and was named for Samuel Johnson, who was at that time governor of the State of North Carolina. This was the crossing of two public highways, one leading from Old Salem, which is now Winston-Salem, to Fayetteville, the other from Salisbury to Hillsboro. Streets were opened in Johnsonville, building sites were improved and sold, and among the public buildings were stores, hotels, bar rooms, smith shops, wood shops and hatter shops, and Johnsonville became the center of business activity.

Randolph County was established by the Legislature of 1779, which was then in session at Halifax. The county came from a portion of Guilford and Rowan, and soon thereafter Justices were nominated for the purpose of holding court in Randolph County.

J. Addison Blair, in his "Reminiscences of Randolph County," referred to Johnsonville as "The Mecca of the desert, the center of rank and fashion." He also referred to the many attractions which the town offered, among them being the annual county fair which featured horse racing events each year.

It was at Johnsonville on December 11, 1787, when a tall young man about twenty years of age entered the court house and produced his license authorizing him to practice as an attorney. This man was Andrew Jackson, who defeated John Quincy Adams in 1828 for the presidency of the United States. Little is known of Jackson's reason for coming to Johnsonville, neither is it known how long he remained in Randolph County.

In 1793, fourteen years after the county was established, the court house was moved to Asheboro and the little town of Johnsonville apparently took on less importance. None of the original buildings are standing today, and even the name of this town has been lost during the passing years.

The town of Worthville is located to the southeast of Randleman on Deep River. This town was formerly known as Hopper's Ford, having received its name from Charles Hopper, who settled near the ford about the year 1790. J. M. and T. C. Worth built the first cotton manufacturing plant and the town was named in honor of these two men. At one time the mill was consolidated with the mill at Central Falls and they were operated under the same management as Worthville Manufacturing Company. The mill as we know it today is Leward Cotton Mill, and the town still remains as a thriving community, with a number of her citizens filling important positions in Randleman and others taking an active interest in Randleman's civic affairs.

Items of interest regarding other outlying sections of Randleman include the fact that the Old Union Methodist Church, which is located about two miles north from the city limits of Randleman, was the site of the first camp meeting ever held in the state of North Carolina. The church was built about the year 1786, and the famous camp meeting was held in 1802.

An historical old site which has been mentioned several times in connection with the Revolutionary War is the Walker Mill site, located above Randleman on Deep River. Samuel Walker owned the original Mill on Sandy Creek, and in 1773 this mill was devised to his son, William Walker. It is believed that this mill was burned during the Revolutionary War, and William Bell built the mill that is now known as Walker's Mill about 1782.

When Bloomfield school was built is not recorded. It was located where the Pilgrim Holiness Church now stands. The building consisted of a vestibule and one classroom. In 1885 E. S. Coble was its faculty. During this period the Negro citizens of the community held monthly religious services in the building.

Bloomfield was a special charter school, supported by funds provided by a special tax rate on the district. As its enrollment increased, a primary department was created which occupied the vestibule. Around 1900 three more rooms were added. The records show that in 1902 this school had the largest enrollment in the county.

Among the outstanding teachers of Bloomfield were Mr. W. C. Hammond, Mrs. Laura Worth, Miss Martha Redding, Miss Florence Redding, Mrs. Alli Marsh Copeland, Miss Babel Dancy, Mr. D. C. Johnson, Miss Nannie Battle and Mr. J. C. Weatherly.

Randleman's present modern school system had its origin in 1904 when Mr. John H. Ferree donated the land which was then a clover field. Brick for the new school was made at a brick yard at Hinshaw's Forks, south of Whitehall. A Mr. Henley made the brick and contracted to furnish and lay the brick for the eight rooms and auditorium for \$10,000. This was the first brick constructed, graded school in Randolph County, built by public funds. Mr. John L. Harris was its first principal.

Later the Ferree house and land was purchased by Dr. C. E. Wilkerson and converted into a hospital. After a few years this property was bought by the Town of Randleman and was given to the school. The hospital was used for several years as a school and later was converted into a principal's home and teacherage.

Sam Newlin, Arch Bulla, Stanhope Bryant, C. C. Randleman

and Wylie Talley were members of the local board when the new school was constructed.

In the earlier part of the twentieth century Randleman had the largest population of any town in Randolph County. At that time it was a thriving textile community, all of the mills being owned and controlled by one parent corporation. Following the Depression in 1929 the Deep River Mills were forced into bankruptcy and the mills were operated by the Hunter Manufacturing & Commission Company of New York City. When the Hunter company went into bankruptcy the Deep River Mills were closed, and for approximately two years there were no payrolls in the entire city.

This condition did not last long, for industrial plants found the city of Randleman well-located for their businesses, and with buildings available and labor plentiful the new industries expanded until there are today 4 full-fashioned hosiery mills, 7 seamless hosiery mills, one lingerie plant, one spinning mill, one spinning and weaving mill, one brass valve manufacturing plant, in or close to, the city of Randleman. Recent estimates are that there are approximately 1800 men and women who earn over 5 million dollars annually from industrial employment. It is estimated that shipments of finished merchandise going from Randleman exceed 30 million dollars annually.

Randleman has built on additions to their buildings in order to take care of expanding operations. Others have added new and modern equipment which has expanded their production. It is considered by those who are familiar with the city and its industrial operations that Randleman industry is well diversified and modern to the point that year-round employment will continue.

Some of this information comes from the BUSINESS DIRECTORY OF RANDOLPH COUNTY published in 1894 by Levi Branson, however, the greater part of it comes from an interview with Mrs. Laura Worth of Asheboro.

Mrs. Worth, the former Laura Stimson, was born in Lexington, N. C., and moved to Randleman at the age of sixteen. She related the fact that when she came to Randleman the largest business, not considering the cotton mills, was the Randleman Store Co. This store was established in 1881 and was the first store of any consequence in Randleman. It handled groceries, dry goods, furniture and undertaking supplies and was under the management of N. N. Newlin.

There was a newspaper organized by Tom Millikan and it is believed this was started during one of the political campaigns and

it is not known how long the newspaper was in existence.

There was one sidewalk in Randleman which consisted of two wide planks which ran on the west side of Main Street from the Dicks home to the Town Hall. The Town Hall and Post Office were located in the three-story building which was used prior to the war by the Randleman Paper Box Co.

The first telephone installations were set up between the mill offices and the depot, however, the first public exchange was set up by Mr. Wiles, who at that time was depot agent for the H.P.R.A.&S.R.R. F. N. Ingold operated a hotel on the property where the P. C. Story home now stands. Mr. Ingold was a magistrate in addition to his hotel business. This home was later sold and Mr. Ingold purchased the J. E. Walker home, where the new First Methodist Church now stands, and operated that as the Ingold Hotel. Mrs. A. L. Mendenhall ran a Boarding House near the depot. There was also another hotel near the depot known as the Walker House which was operated by Mrs. J. O. Walker, whose husband was a physician.

At that time W. H. Winningham was the town marshall. Dr. W. A. Woolen was a practicing physician and also served the town as druggist, selling drugs from his office. Dr. W. A. Fox and Dr. L. L. Sapp were also practicing medicine here at that time.

Talley & Co. served the community with Groceries and Notions. The Naomi Store Co., managed by W. J. Glass, served the Naomi Falls community as general merchants. J. M. Millikan operated a general store and in connection with this business ran a Livery Stable and Feed Store. Mrs. E. N. Wall was a Milliner and Dress-maker.

Quoting from BRANSON'S DIRECTORY—"The cotton factories not only beautify and enrich, but they render musical the very air of the county."

Mrs. Worth relates that most of the entertainment provided the citizens, took place in the three-story Town Hall building, which was more recently used as a manufacturing plant by the Randleman Paper Box Co. A great number of these entertainments were sponsored or arranged by Mrs. S. G. Newlin, the former Mattie Ferree, sister of John H. Ferree. Mrs. Newlin was quite talented and very capable of putting on entertainments which were held almost every week and in some cases more often.

The famous Randleman Band was organized by Charlie Randleman and was made up in part of the following people: Charlie Randleman, Cicero Lineberry, Bob Martin, Rome Dobson, John

Brown, Grover McCollum, Pearlie Hayes, Den Hughes, Jim Hall, Edd Brown, Zack Jarrell, John Richardson, Charlie Weaver, John Lineberry, Lum Kiser, Clark Hinshaw and a Mr. Henderson. The band was completely uniformed with red coats trimmed in black braid with white duck or flannel trousers. It is understood that for a number of years on the Fourth of July the band took part in a parade followed by a concert.

Lawn Parties, Strawberry Festivals and Ice Cream Parties are accredited for most of the social entertainment with the Randleman Band furnishing music for the most important of these events.

Excursions were quite popular during the early days and two of the most famous excursions were made to Fayetteville and Morganton. The Fayetteville trip was made between 1885 and 1887. The factories closed and there were four hundred and four people who arose at three o'clock in the morning in order to catch the 6:30 train. The first stop was at Julian and after that the train stopped at Woodstock and Staley. Following these stops Siler City and Richmond Depot were visited, then Oaks and Gulf. The next stop was Egypt and then Sanford, Jonesboro, Swan Station and Spouting Springs. The train arrived in Fayetteville amid the cheers of the crowd and the playing of the band. The other excursion was made several years later to Morganton. This was a special train attached to the main line and left from the Randleman Depot on Saturday morning. This was a visit to the home of Mr. John H. Ferree. It is also told that on this trip a number of young Mimosa trees were brought back, apparently the Mimosa was an unusual tree to this section before the time of the excursion. A large number of citizens went on this excursion. They returned to Randleman at 3 o'clock Sunday morning.

Information from BRANSON'S BUSINESS DIRECTORY OF RANDOLPH COUNTY 1894 lists the First Baptist Church, Mr. Carrick of Lexington pastor, Mt. Lebanon Methodist Protestant Church, Mr. C. C. Cecil, pastor, Naomi Falls Methodist Episcopal Church South and St. Paul's Episcopal Church South, Mr. N. R. Richardson, pastor.

An interesting fact related to Mrs. Worth by Walter Gregson, son of Amos Gregson, in 1943, is that the original frame church which was used by St. Paul and was built in 1852 was moved East of the original site and was used while the brick building was being erected. The new brick church was built at an approximate cost of \$4,000, and was decorated by Reuben Rink, trade name of Korner of Kernersville who was the builder of "Korner's Folly." Mr. Rink

also decorated the home of John B. Randleman and others while he was in Randleman. The decoration of the church was greatly admired and remains practically unchanged today. Upon completion of the new church, the old frame structure was torn down and rebuilt in Naomi as the Naomi Falls Church in 1883. When the present Naomi Church was built the old building was again torn down and was used to build the present Pilgrim Holiness Church just outside of Randleman on the Worthville Road.

According to the Branson Directory there were nine ministers residing in Randleman. A number of these had pulpits out of town and it is not known just why so many of these selected Randleman as their home.

Probably the best known of these ministers was Mr. Amos Gregson, who was superintendent of the Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co., in addition to carrying on his activities as minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

We quote from the editorial notes in Branson's Directory referring to Randolph County. "This is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful sections of the state, and a grand future is in store for the land of our birth if we still remain true to her destiny."

It seems that everyone who wrote about the mills or about Deep River was impressed by the music of the waters and the cotton mills' machinery. The following was written by a "Warper Tender" and appeared in a "Mill News."

"In the northern part of Randolph County flows the beautiful stream known as the Deep River. For thousands of years this river has sported along the same time-worn channel, over the same rocks and made the same sad music it sings today. As we walk by its side and stand upon its mossy banks our thoughts steal away on its dancing ripples and are lost amid its splashing waters.

"Up and down this river whose idle waters were the sport and companion of the Indian, whose camp ground and huts but typified the rising villages of busy industry, are heard the banging loom, the buzzing spindles and the eternal thunder of machinery proclaiming each day the praises of those who have founded the villages and built the mills."

THE CITY OF RANDLEMAN, N. C.

THE CITY OF RANDLEMAN is located on the banks of Deep River and the rolling land extending beyond. A search for the best and cheapest means of obtaining operating power has from its earliest days played a predominating part in influencing the location and growth of this town, or city as the charter reads. Peter Dicks found just that when he harnessed the rippling waters of Deep River to power his grist and oil mill, the town's first industry. The early settlers came from miles around to bring their corn and wheat to be ground into meal and flour, their cotton ginned and its seeds ground and pressed into oil by the Dicks' Mill. From this little mill Randleman grew to attain the position in 1890 of being the largest town in Randolph County.

DICK'S MILL

Peter Dicks built a grist and oil mill, just below the present concrete bridge over Deep River on Highway 220 in 1800. Gradually as a few people began to settle near the mill the section began to grow and was called Dicks until 1848 when the Union Factory was built.

PETER DICKS

Peter Dicks, in the dim and distant past, put a little grist and oil mill on the banks of Deep River and the place became known as Dicks' Mill. Peter Dicks was a man of affairs as counted in his day. He was a farmer and owned large tracts of land; he was a merchant, operating a store in the then thriving village of New Salem. He served in many public affairs from the founding of the County of Randolph, having been Clerk of the Court of Equity and Commissioner, or Justice. He was one of the founders of New Garden Boarding School, now Guilford College, and throughout his life remained trustee of the school. In addition he was a minister of the Society of Friends and overseer of Center Monthly Meeting.

He was a man of sound sense, good judgment and sterling integrity. He died in February 1843, and is buried in Center Meeting House graveyard. He was the progenitor of a large family, connections of which are now living in this and other states.

JAMES DICKS

James Dicks, son of Peter Dicks, was born at Center, Guilford County, May 18, 1804, and died in Randleman, October 14, 1883.

He was one of the original builders and stockholders of the

Union Factory at Randleman. He was also an extensive planter and successfully tilled the soil. He was a gentleman of acknowledged intellectual abilities and possessed considerable wealth and at the beginning of the war in 1861 he was appointed commissioner to collect supplies for the Confederate Army. He and his parents before him were members of the religious Society of Friends and to this faith he remained a member while contributing generously to the building of churches of other denominations. He was highly esteemed by all for the rectitude of his life and his many deeds of kindness.

(Copied from Biographical Sketches of Men of Randolph County, 1890).

WILLIAM CLARK

William Clark was born October 22, 1808. He married Louisa Worth January 23, 1834, and settled in New Salem and engaged in the mercantile business and in addition became a stockholder in the Union Cotton Mill. He removed his house to Union (Randleman) and lived where the present Woolen place is. He was agent for the Mill. In 1860 he moved to Indiana and continued his mercantile business.

He was a descendant of Col. William Clark who fought in the Revolutionary War. The family were members of the Society of Friends, belonging to Center Monthly Meeting. Later they were members of Marlboro Monthly Meeting, being transferred April 4, 1818.

William Clark and wife had a large family, seven sons and five daughters and their descendants are active business and professional men and women throughout the west.

JOHN B. RANDLEMAN

John B. Randleman was born September 11, 1827, in the part of Stokes County which is now Forsythe. While a rather young man he received good experience in several cotton mills.

He purchased the Union Factory in Randleman July 7, 1868. While working at Newlin's Factory Mr. Randleman was married to Miss Julia E. Duke. To this union were born three children, Alice, Ida Josephine and C. C. Randleman.

Mr. Randleman died in 1879 and was buried in St. Paul's Methodist Church cemetery.

JOHN H. FERREE

Secretary and Treasurer of Randleman Manufacturing Co.—Born

June, 1839, at Morganton, Burke County—son of Rev. Joseph D. and Mary E. Morrow Ferree. His father was a local minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and for twelve years Clerk of Superior Court of Burke County being elected to the first in 1844 and again in 1848.

In 1868 he located in Randleman and engaged in the manufacture of cotton fabric in co-partnership with John B. Randleman and organized the now well known Randleman Manufacturing Co. He was elected Secretary and Treasurer after the death of Mr. Randleman in 1879 and had entire control of the business. This company and others built in 1879-80 the Naomi Falls Cotton Mill in Randleman and Mr. Ferree was President and large stockholder. Also Secretary and Treasurer of Plaidville Manufacturing Co. and Secretary and Treasurer of the Southern Plaid Manufacturing Association.

Notwithstanding his many interests he found time to devote to the civil interests of his county, in the capacity of County Commissioner in 1866 (error in date). He was Director of Greensboro Female College and Trustee of Trinity College.

He was married April 10, 1873, to Miss Alice, daughter of John Banner and Julia E. Duke Randleman of Randleman, Randolph County. Three children, Julia Antoinette, John and Mary A.

He was for many years an active and official member of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and for several years Superintendent of the Sunday School of St. Paul's.

Mr. Ferree died in March 1898 and is buried in the family plot at St. Paul's Church.

(Copied in 1941 from Historical and Biographical Sketches, 1890.)

JAMES E. WALKER

Secretary and Treasurer of the Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co., was born in February, 1844, in Randolph County, North Carolina, and was a son of Jesse and Anna M. Dicks Walker. He was of German and Scottish descent.

He was educated in the schools of Guilford and Forsythe Counties and entered Trinity College in 1862.

In partnership with his brother, Samuel Walker, he engaged in a general merchandise business in Asheboro, North Carolina, for three years. He then sold out his interest and located in Randleman and purchased an interest in the Naomi Falls Cotton Manufacturing Co.

In 1886 he built the Powhatan Cotton Factory, located in Rand-

leman, with a capacity for the manufacture of one million yards of plaid per annum.

He was twice elected Mayor of Randleman and was a Justice of the Peace for many years. He was for twelve years Superintendent of the Randleman Sunday School and was President of the District Conference Sunday School and a Steward and Trustee of the Church.

He was united in marriage in September, 1865, to Miss Fannie (Frances) M., the accomplished niece of Rev. L. S. Burkhead. To this union were born seven children viz: Jesse O., a graduate of Vanderbilt University and a successful physician at Randleman, Cornelius, Thomas C., Bartlett B., Allie, Pattie and Samuel.

THE REV. AMOS GREGSON

Superintendent of Naomi Falls Cotton Mills of Randleman and President of the same company, was born March, 1839, in Randolph County, son of Julius C. and Holland Gregson. His parents were of Irish and German extraction. His father was a farmer and for many years a local minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. Mr. Gregson attended the county schools and was prepared for college when the war began, which prevented him from securing a collegiate course. Nevertheless he succeeded by close application to study in storing his mind with a vast amount of useful information which enabled him to be of great service to the Master's cause. At the age of eleven he began to work in the cotton mill and mastered every part of the work. In 1859 he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church South and in 1865 was ordained a Deacon by Bishop Early. He discharged his sacred duties with ability and was called a step higher and was ordained an Elder by Bishop Pierce. In 1866-67, he was Pastor of Main Street Methodist Episcopal Church South in Durham and largely through his influence and hard work the present Main Street Methodist Episcopal Church was erected, also the Carr M. E. Church. He did a good work in that thriving city and will long be remembered by its citizens.

(Copied from Historical and Biographical Sketches of 1890.)

* * *

Mr. Gregson married in 1865 Miss Martitia Dicks, daughter of James and Nancy Dicks. To this union four children, Claudia, E. Walter, J. Clarence and Nancy Beatrice were born. All lived in Randleman on Main Street. Mr. Gregson built the house on St. Paul Hill in which the J. O. Pickard family live. Both Mr. and Mrs. Gregson were buried in St. Paul's cemetery.

By Mrs. Laura Worth

JAMES OLIVER PICKARD

James Oliver Pickard was born October 15, 1844, in Orange County, North Carolina.

Before coming to Randleman, Mr. Pickard was connected with the Holt Cotton Mills in Alamance, coming from that mill to work for the Randleman Manufacturing Co. In 1879, he, along with J. E. Walker, Amos Gregson and John H. Ferree built the Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co. Mr. Pickard was a Director in the Plaidville Manufacturing Co. and was Superintendent of the Randleman Manufacturing Co.

In 1868 he was married to Margaret Elizabeth Baker of Haw River. To this union were born three children, Annie, James O. and William H. Pickard. James O. married the former Clara Wall and was employed by Reynolds Tobacco Co. for many years. He lived at the home place until his death November 25, 1961. His father died January 31, 1900, and is buried in St. Paul's cemetery.

ROBERT PEELE DICKS

Was Secretary and Treasurer of Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co., President of the High Point and Southern Railroad Co., and President of the Southern Association of Plaid Manufacturers. He was born January 22, 1847, at Randleman and was a son of James and Nancy Coltrane Dicks. R. P. Dicks enjoyed exceptionally good educational advantages, having attended Hillsboro Military College and completed his collegiate course at Trinity College.

At the age of eighteen he began the mercantile business at Walkertown and Lexington, N. C. Three years later he moved to Texas and accepted the position as Traveling Agent for a wholesale druggist of St. Louis, Mo. He traveled extensively over the West for six years. In the meantime he established a wholesale and retail drug business for himself at Sherman, Texas. He also leased and operated two hotels and engaged extensively in the cattle and land traffic. During his business life of about ten years in the West he accumulated quite a handsome fortune. In 1882 he returned to his native County of Randolph and assumed control of the Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co. and was appointed Secretary and Treasurer of this company, a position which he held at the time of his death. He owned controlling stock of this company and was also engaged in general merchandise business.

He was a man of superb business sagacity and was easily a leader in every progressive move in his County and State.

In November, 1871, he married Miss Mary Cornelia, accom-

plished daughter of Major James P. and Elizabeth Stimson of Lexington, N. C. To this union were born five children. Mr. Dicks was a great lover of home and had erected and tastefully furnished a handsome home in Randleman, where he dispersed a delightful hospitality. Mr. Dicks died at the early age of forty-one years.

(A very much reduced sketch from Historical and Biographical Sketches published in 1890).

STANHOPE BRYANT

Stanhope Bryant was a native of Richmond, Virginia, a son of Dr. James S. and Harriet Tinsley Bryant, and came to Randleman in 1890. He was before connected with a wholesale drug company in Richmond. After coming to Randleman he established the first drug store in the town, located near the old Randleman home.

Shortly after his arrival he became connected with the Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co., and was made Secretary and Treasurer of the company. He married Miss Lillian Dicks, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. P. Dicks and built the beautiful home on Naomi Street now owned by the P. C. Story family.

J. C. WATKINS

J. Clarence Watkins was a native of Montgomery County, having been born at Troy. He was the son of W. H. Watkins, who was at that time manager of the Columbia Manufacturing Co. of Ramseur.

R. P. DEAL

R. P. Deal was born in Catawba County, North Carolina, in 1872. He began his mill work at Ilchester, Maryland, near Baltimore. He later became General Manager of the Siluria Cotton Mills Co., of Siluria, Alabama, where he was located until 1911, leaving that position to become connected with the Deep River Mills, Inc., and Pomona Mills. Mr. Deal remained at the head of the Deep River Mills until it closed in 1930. He died in 1943.

S. G. NEWLIN

S. G. Newlin was born in Randolph County in 1856. His first business experience was as a merchant at New Market, where he carried on an extensive business for five years. In 1879 he moved to Randleman where he later served as President of Randleman Manufacturing Co., and Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co. just prior to the organization of the Deep River Mills, Inc.

A. B. BEASLEY

Alfred Brinkley Beasley was born five miles west of Asheboro, August 31, 1881. While a small boy, his family moved to Randleman where he attended school and worked in spare time in the Powhatan Mill, the Randleman Hosiery Mill operated by A. N. Bulla and the Bargain House which was operated at the time by Mr. Council.

He worked his way through Trinity, now Duke University, in a dry cleaning plant, later becoming secretary to the faculty. After college he worked for the American Exchange Bank in Greensboro. When The Peoples Building and Loan Association and The Bank of Randleman merged forming the Peoples Bank in 1910, he became the cashier and remained with the bank until his death, at which time he was President.

"Alf" Beasley, as he was known best, married Miss Ollie Mae Fentress in 1928. He was proud that his bank weathered the depression days of the early thirties and when Randleman had no industries, they had a bank; while Greensboro had industries, but every bank was closed. At that time many Greensboro citizens did their banking in Randleman and continued to do so during his lifetime.

A. B. Beasley worked tirelessly to build Randleman. He served as mayor and worked to get highway 220 through the city. He also worked to get industry in operation and was more active than any other one person in getting a city owned and operated water plant and sewage disposal for Randleman. He died January, 1951.

P. C. STORY

Phillip Custer Story was born September 2, 1876 in Ludlow, Massachusetts. He graduated from Palmer High School at the age of 15, after which he worked as office boy, bookkeeper, accountant, overseer, superintendent and general manager of one of the Old New England Textile Manufacturing plants, Palmer Mill at Three Rivers, Massachusetts. He married Ethel Louise Merrell of Collinsville, Connecticut on June 6, 1900.

In 1916 P. C. Story moved his family to Randleman where he was superintendent of the Deep River Mills until 1923, after which he went back to Palmer Mill as superintendent until 1926. At this time in his life he moved to New Orleans as General Manager of the Maginnis Cotton Mills. He returned to Randleman in 1930 as General Manager of the Deep River Mills which at the time was

being operated by the Hunter Manufacturing and Commission Company.

After the Hunter Company closed their operations, he was manager of Randtex and Faytex Mills, Pee Dee Mills and Rhodes Mills. He died March 13, 1957.

ARCH NIXON BULLA

Arch Bulla was born in Back Creek township in Randolph County, March 24, 1869, the son of Joseph Chapman Bulla and Lydia Henly Bulla. He attended Guilford College and in 1892 married Dora Ellen Julian.

He organized the first hosiery mill in Randolph County and one of the first in the south, The Randleman Hosiery Mills. He served several terms as mayor of Randleman and during his administrations the first streets were improved and sidewalks laid down. He was influential in getting the first power producing plant in the city.

Arch Bulla was a Quaker, later joining the Methodist Church; he was also a Mason and served as chairman of the County Commissioners at the time the present court house was built. He died October 27, 1951.

UNION FACTORY

In the year 1848 the following men formed a company and built a cotton mill naming it The Union Factory: Jesse Walker, James Dicks, William Clark, Joseph Newlin, Charles W. Woolen, Samuel Hill, David Coltrane, S. D. Bumpass, Jonathan P. Winslow, Jabez Hodgins, Dougan Clark, Eliahue E. Mendenhall, William Hinshaw and Nathan B. Hill. Joseph Newlin was secretary and William Clark was Agent.

The Union Factory was located just north of Dicks' Mill on the banks of Deep River.

RANDLEMAN MANUFACTURING CO.

In 1868 John B. Randleman and John H. Ferree purchased the Union Factory from George W. Swepson and the name was changed to Randleman Manufacturing Co. Several new buildings were added to the original Union Factory by Mr. Randleman and Mr. Ferree.

NAOMI FALLS MANUFACTURING CO.

In 1878 Mr. Randleman suggested to Mr. Ferree that they build another mill on the shoals just below the Randleman Man-

ufacturing Co., and that they get J. O. Pickard, Logan Weaver and Amos Gregson to form a company with them, however, Mr. Randleman died before the company was formed. In 1879 John H. Ferree, J. E. Walker, J. O. Pickard and Amos Gregson formed the Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co., and the Naomi Mill was built. The mill was completed and on February 24th, 1880, it was dedicated to the service of God by Dr. Braxton Craven and is believed to be the only case in history where such a dedication has taken place.

POWHATAN MILL

The Powhatan Mill was established in Randleman in 1886, and was located on the corner of Depot and Main Streets with O. R. Cox, President; J. E. Walker, Secretary and Treasurer. It was established for the purpose of manufacturing colored fabrics.

The mill was bought in 1894 by Hal M. Worth and James A. McAllister and the name was changed to Engleworth Cotton Mills, being named for both Mr. and Mrs. Worth. It operated seventy plaid looms operating with electric power and had its own mill village.

COMING OF THE RAILROAD

In 1887 the High Point, Randleman, Asheboro and Southern Railroad was built through Randleman. The coming of the railroad was heralded as a great event in the community. It was a great improvement, providing speedy transportation and communication throughout the territory. The roads were none too good at best and quite often impassable in rough weather. The railroad assured the town of quicker handling of freight both in and out.

On the day of the first train everything in Randleman closed down and the people of the town turned out for a big celebration and saw the first engine come puffing into Randleman from High Point amid the wild noise of bugles and drums. The town was decorated with banners, and loud cheers met the first train upon its arrival.

RANDLEMAN HOSIERY MILLS

In 1893 L. A. Spencer, A. N. Bulla and S. G. Newlin organized the Randleman Hosiery Mills. The hosiery mill was located in the old Spencer Building, on the Northeast corner of South Main and East Brown Streets, but was soon moved to a new building in the

center of town. The concern manufactured ladies' and children's ribbed hose and according to the Randolph County Business Directory published in 1894, produced approximately 30,000 dozen pairs annually and employed forty people. It was the first hosiery mill in Randolph County.

PLAIDVILLE MILLS

The Plaidville Mills were erected in 1887 and were located southwest of the Randleman Manufacturing Co., between St. Paul's Church and the railroad station.

It was organized by the same interests as the Randleman Manufacturing Co., with John H. Ferree owning controlling stock. Mr. Ferree was President; S. G. Newlin, Secretary and Treasurer, and J. O. Pickard, Superintendent. Plaidville operated 175 looms and was engaged in the manufacture of plaids and cottonades.

MARIE ANTOINETTE

The Marie Antionette was completed in 1895 and was built by the same interests and controlled by the Randleman Manufacturing Co. This mill was located about half way between the Plaidville Mill and the Randleman Manufacturing Co., and was named for Mr. Ferree's two daughters.

THE RANDLEMAN STORE CO.

The Randleman Store Co. was the first store in the town of Randieman and continued as such for a great many years. Being a general store a variety of articles were handled. Almost anything that could be purchased could be had at the Randleman Store Co. After having run the store for a number of years the Randleman Manufacturing Co. sold the store to N. N. and J. N. Newlin in 1881. The two brothers remained active in the business until N. N. Newlin's death in 1935. His death came about in the same year in which his son, Jack Newlin, became an active partner in the store. J. J. Newlin passed away in the early part of 1944, remaining active almost until the time of his death.

The Randleman Store Co. was located since its inception just above the Randleman Manufacturing Co. in a long three-story frame building. The store moved in 1931 to its present location in the center of town. The building which the store formerly occupied burned to the ground in January, 1940. Grier G. Newlin now operates this 81-year-old business.

THE BANK OF RANDLEMAN

The Bank of Randleman was organized in 1900 with Stanhope Bryant, President, and J. H. Cole, Cashier. Mr. Bryant was succeeded by N. N. Newlin as President and in 1910 the Bank of Randleman was consolidated with the Peoples Bank.

RANDLEMAN CHAIR COMPANY

The Randleman Chair Company was organized by John R. Ferree, son of John H. Ferree, about 1905. It operated successfully for a few years and in 1912 was sold to Newton Farlow, then Superintendent of Schools, Tom Farlow and L. A. Spencer. These men operated the company until about the time of the outbreak of the First World War at which time it was sold to Bob Lambeth of Thomasville. It continued its operation under the new management until about the time the war ended when the machinery and equipment were moved to Denton.

THE PEOPLES BANK

The Peoples Savings Loan and Trust Company was organized in 1907 with John L. Newlin as President. One or two years later Dr. W. I. Sumner was elected President.

After three years of operations the Peoples Savings Loan and Trust Company took over the Bank of Randleman and the name was changed to the Peoples Bank. William H. Pickard was later succeeded as President by T. F. Wrenn of High Point. Mr. Wrenn was succeeded by R. P. Deal who served as President of the bank until his death in 1943. A. B. Beasley was then elected President of the bank, he himself being succeeded as cashier by E. S. Bailey.

RANDOLPH GROCERY CO.

This company was organized October 12, 1914, by taking over the Smitherman Co., which was a branch of the concern in Greensboro by the same name. The original incorporators were W. G. Brown, A. B. Beasley, W. R. Roberts, G. H. Ivey, Frank Talley and H. A. Moffitt of High Point. The officers were A. B. Beasley, President; Frank Talley, Secretary and Treasurer and General Manager.

The corporation was dissolved in 1932 and became a partnership between Frank Talley and his brother Ernest Talley who had joined the organization in 1920.

This is the oldest wholesale grocer in the Piedmont under continuous management, and today covers Randolph, Moore and Montgomery counties and part of Davidson, Guilford and Chatham counties.



COMMONWEALTH HOSIERY MILLS, INC.

DEEP RIVER MILLS, INC.

In June, 1911, the interests of the Randleman Manufacturing Co., Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co., Plaidville Mill and Marie Antoinette Mill were taken over by the Deep River Mills, Inc., with the following men making up the officials of the company; J. C. Watkins, President and Treasurer; T. A. Hunter, Secretary, and R. P. Deal, Manager.

The company owned about 300 acres of land, two dams, mill buildings and dwellings. The new company installed an extensive and modern power plant which was used to operate all of this machinery. About 600 people were employed by the Deep River Mills, Inc.

SALE OF THE DEEP RIVER MILLS, INC.

On September 25, 1933, the property and machinery of the Deep River Mills, Inc., was sold at public auction. The sale was held in the Mill No. 1 yard and all the properties which were then owned by the Deep River Mills, Inc., were sold. This included the No. 1 group which was formerly known as the Randleman Manufacturing Co., and which contained the buildings now used by the Commonwealth Hosiery Mills, Inc., the Quinn Mill, Plaidville and Marie Antoinette Mills. The two latter buildings being used today by the Randolph Underwear Co. The No. 1 group was sold to A. B. Beasley of Randleman and E. W. Freeze, Sr., of High Point.

The No. 2 mill consisted of the former Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co. and included in addition to this the Naomi Roller Mill. The property was sold to R. L. Huffine of Fayetteville, who later transferred the property to the Randtex Mills.

In addition to the No. 1 and 2 units the Deep River Mills, Inc., had owned and sold on that day property adjoining the No. 1 group which was known as the Company Farm, consisting of approximately 200 acres, the Walker Mill property, the Cox Power Plant and several other pieces of property throughout the town.

In May, 1934, the Commonwealth Hosiery Mills, Inc., of High Point received a shipment of three carloads of knitting machinery which was unloaded and set up in its present location. This was the first payroll which the town of Randleman had had since 1930.

COMMONWEALTH HOSIERY MILLS, INC.

Commonwealth Hosiery Mills was incorporated in High Point in October 1916, with J. Elwood Cox as President; A. N. Briggs, Vice-President, and H. A. White, Secretary and Treasurer. Opera-



A. J. SCHNEIERSON & SON, INC.

tions were begun in a building belonging to the High Point Buggy Factory, which it later purchased and where it operated until 1934. E. W. Freeze, Sr., was elected Secretary and Treasurer in 1919 and took over the active management of the business. The equipment was moved to Randleman in 1934 and E. W. Freeze, Sr., continued as active head of the business until his death on March 3, 1943. Mrs. E. W. Freeze, Sr., of High Point, is President, W. D. Freeze and Baxter Freeze are Vice-Presidents and A. J. Ballinger is superintendent.

MACE MANUFACTURING CO.

The Mace Manufacturing Co. of Brooklyn, N. Y., rented the building directly behind the boiler room of the Commonwealth Hosiery Mills in 1934. The mill was under the supervision of a Mr. Ingstrom and they operated a number of looms making fancy cloth.

After two years' operation the Mace Manufacturing Co. purchased the building formerly known as Plaidville Mill and the equipment was moved, additional machinery being installed in 1936. Mr. Ingstrom was succeeded by a Mr. Thompson. The following year the equipment was moved to Brooklyn, N. Y., and in 1938 the property was sold to Randolph Underwear Co.

RANDTEX MILLS, INC.

The Randtex Mills was established in 1934 in the property formerly used as the Deep River Mills No. 2 mill. R. L. Huffine of Fayetteville was President of this corporation and P. C. Story of Randleman was made Manager of the business. The mill manufactured fancy colored cotton fabric.

RANDOLPH LINGERIE

This company was formerly known as Pinehurst Frocks. It was incorporated May 5, 1936, with W. A. Armfield, President; W. J. Armfield, Jr., Vice-President; and W. J. Armfield, III, Secretary and Treasurer. Operations which were begun in Asheboro consisted of the manufacture of dresses and house robes. The business was moved to Randleman early in 1938 and changed to the manufacture of ladies slips. At the same time the company was moved the name was changed to Randolph Underwear Co., Inc., and the officers were W. J. Armfield, III, President; Howard Sprague, Vice-President, and J. D. Croom, Secretary and Treasurer.

In January, 1944, I. Schneierson & Sons, Inc., of New York City, purchased the building and machinery.

On February 1, 1957 the name was changed to A. J. Schneierson & Son, Inc., and continues under the direction of J. F. Parish, Vice-President and General Manager.

LAUGHLIN FULL FASHIONED HOSIERY MILLS, INC.

The Laughlin Full Fashioned Hosiery Mills was incorporated in 1938 with T. L. Laughlin, President and Treasurer; W. J. Armfield, Jr., Vice-President, and A. B. Beasley, Secretary. The company manufactures ladies full fashioned and seamless nylon hosiery. President is T. L. Laughlin with N. C. Lowe and W. J. Armfield, Jr., vice-Presidents and E. W. Welborn, Jr., Secretary and Treasurer.

BURLINGTON MILLS

Burlington Mills started operating this plant in 1939 as a part of their large expansion into the hosiery field. It became one of the best equipped hosiery plants in the country. Operation was discontinued in 1957 and machinery was moved to Burlington's other hosiery plants. The buildings were sold to a group organized to take it over for the operation of United Brass Works, Inc.

RANDLEMAN PAPER BOX MANUFACTURING CO.

The Randleman Paper Box Manufacturing Co. was organized January 4, 1939, by Commonwealth Hosiery Mills and W. D. Freeze, who was its active manager. The latest equipment for manufacturing set-up boxes was installed and operated until July, 1942, when its employees totaled approximately 40. The business was liquidated in that month due to W. D. Freeze entering the armed services.

ADORABLE HOSIERY MILLS

W. G. Oliver started operation of the Adorable Hosiery Mills in August 1951. They are manufacturers of ladies full fashioned nylon hosiery. It started and has continued since with W. G. Oliver being sole owner.

RANDLEMAN MILLS, INC.

The Randleman Mills were incorporated in 1941 as a subsidiary of the Susquehanna Silk Mills of Sunbury, Pa., of which Frederick Kloeckener is President. This mill occupied the building originally built by the Naomi Falls Manufacturing Co. and produced cotton

yarns from 30's and 60's in rayon and wool. Since its organization it had been almost entirely in production on materials used by the armed forces. Approximately 15,000 spindles were in operation employing about 200 people. This mill was sold to Cone Mills in 1949.

WEE-SOX HOSIERY MILLS

Wee-Sox Hosiery Mill was founded in May, 1944, and incorporated in 1946. It is operated by the same interests that operate Commonwealth Hosiery Mills, manufacturing infants' and children's hosiery. W. D. Freeze is President, Baxter P. Freeze is Vice-President, E. W. Freeze, Jr., is Secretary and Treasurer, and A. J. Ballinger is Superintendent.

CONE MILLS

The Cone Mills purchased the Naomi Mill from Randleman Mills, Inc. in 1949 and operated it as a yarn spinning mill until it was leased to J. P. Stevens in late 1956.

J. P. STEVENS CO.

This organization grew out of a company organized in 1813 in Andover, Mass., which was started by Nathaniel Stevens. The J. P. Stevens Co. was organized in 1899 by John P. Stevens, grandson of the founder, as a textile selling agent.

Today the J. P. Stevens Co. operates 54 plants employing more than 35,000 persons. The Randleman plant was obtained from Cone Mills in 1956 and operates an up-to-date synthetic spinning operation. J. D. Huffstetler is plant manager and Bob Wishon is office manager.

MT. LEBANON

The ground on which Mt. Lebanon Church stands was deeded to Joseph Causey, a minister. This deed was made on the 28th day of September, 1849. Deeded by James Cooper, G. P. Lineberry and Howgil Julian as Trustees of the Union Society of Methodist Protestant, which later became known as Mt. Lebanon Methodist Protestant Church.

The church was built in the year 1850 by John Gibson. It was the first church to be built in Randleman, then called Union Factory. Among the foremost ones interested in the building of the church were Rev. Z. C. Lineberry, Rastus Lewis, Howgil Julian and Davis Harriey. In the year 1877, under the management of Wilburn

Wood the church had a membership of 150, many of them relatives of those most active in building the church.

Mt. Lebanon was a part of Randolph Circuit for several years, being changed to Randleman Circuit in 1920.

ST. PAUL

The first place where the Methodists held religious services was at an old house near where the old Ingold Hotel stands. A little later they moved to the Bloomfield school house and held class meetings, prayer meetings and preaching. The St. Paul Sunday School was organized at this place by David R. Caudle.

About the year 1855, the Methodists decided to have a church. A preacher whose name was Tinnin, along with David Caudle and others, organized a Methodist Episcopal Church and called it St. Paul.

James Dicks donated the ground where St. Paul now stands. Jesse Walker gave \$100 and others gave liberally. It was a wood structure and cost about \$500. The charter members were Nancy Dicks, David R. Caudle and wife, Rev. C. J. Gregson and wife, and others.

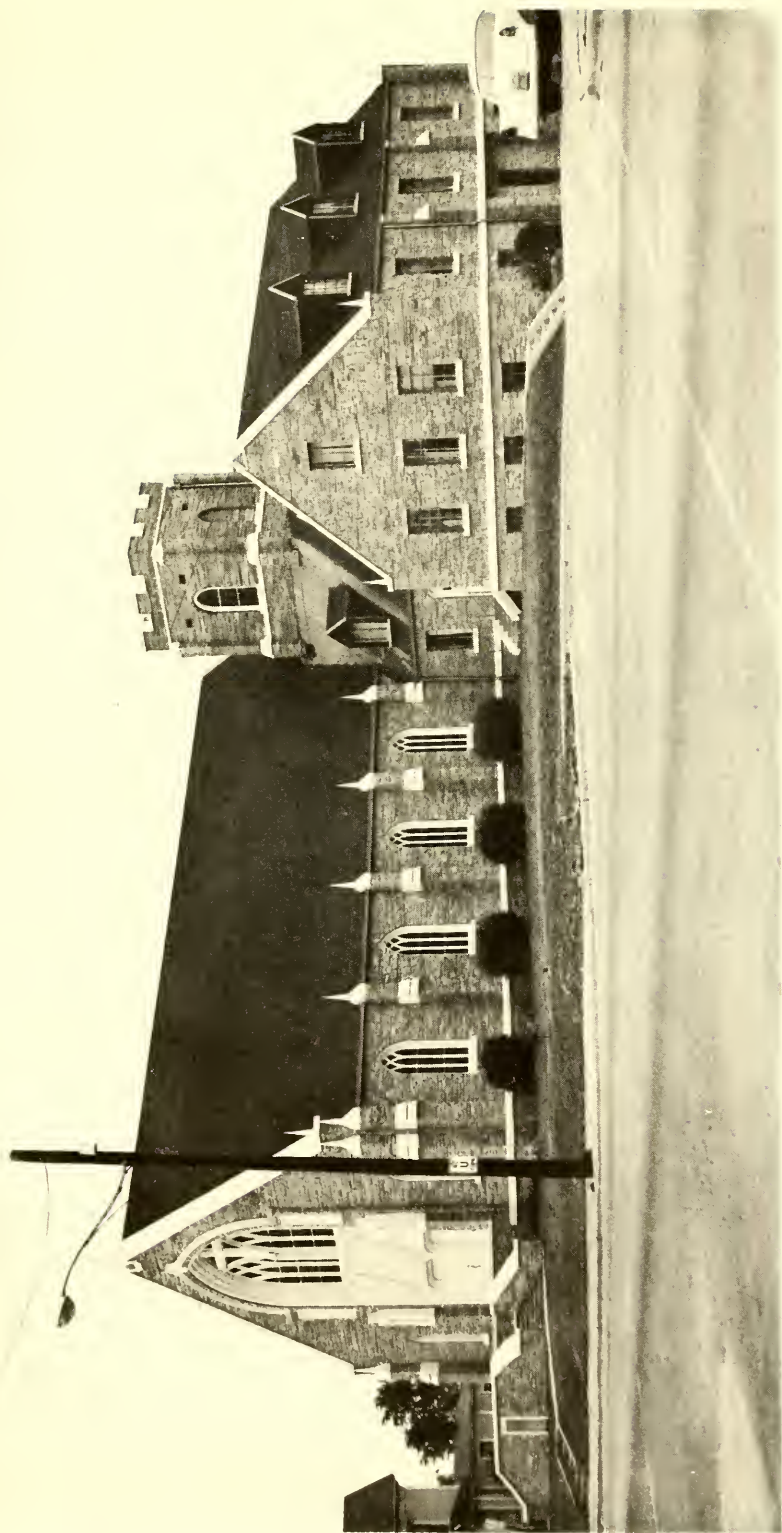
In 1879 the present building was finished. Peter Clark and Allen Redding did the brick work and Robin Rink, whose real name was Korner, did the painting inside.

NAOMI METHODIST CHURCH

In 1883 under the direction of Rev. Amos Gregson for the convenience of the residents of Naomi a series of prayer meetings were held in cottages of the various residents of that community. Soon after this a site was given to the group for the erection of a church and a white frame building put up. This location was about two or three hundred yards south of the present Naomi Church, where the family of W. C. Robbins now lives.

In 1903 the church which is now used was erected and dedicated the following year.

Rev. S. M. Bumpass was the first station pastor serving from 1883 to 1887. Naomi and St. Paul were served by the same pastor and Rev. Bumpass served both congregations. Some of Naomi's early members active in its organization and its development were the J. E. Walker family, the W. W. Redding family, Mrs. J. T. Bostic and Miss Mary Bostic, the A. W. Vickory family, Rev. Amos Gregson, Samuel E. Bostic, Mr. and Mrs. R. P. Dicks, T. O. Bowden, J. H. Cole and Stanhope Bryant.



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Christian Church was organized in 1890. The first church was built in the southern part of Randleman. The first pastor was Rev. Bolivar Richardson who served from the time of its organization until 1892. The church moved to its present location in West Randleman where it now stands in the year 1892 and Rev. Richardson was followed by Rev. E. H. Jarrell. The Sunday School was organized in the year 1895.

THE PILGRIM HOLINESS CHURCH

In April, 1901, in a prayer meeting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Vuncannon, The Apostolic Holiness Church was organized with nineteen charter members. It was part of an international church and missionary organization known as The Apostolic Holiness Union with headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio. After using a brush arbor for about two years, the church purchased the old Naomi Methodist Church building in 1903 for \$100. It was torn down and rebuilt at the site of the Country Holiness Church and Cemetery on the Worthville Road. This building remained until 1960.

After a number of years and while Rev. Samuel S. Nelson was pastor, the Apostolic Holiness Church purchased the old Bloomfield School property in Randleman, converted the building into a church and parsonage and moved into Randleman. In April 1916, after Rev. W. A. Way became pastor, a tabernacle was built by the side of the church. For 45 years annual camp meetings were held in the tabernacle. The tabernacle was torn down in 1961.

In March 1961, Rev. James Denny became pastor, a brick educational building was begun, and plans were made for a new sanctuary in the future.

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

The First Methodist Church came into existence January 12, 1944, as the result of a ballot cast January 2, 1944, at Naomi Church and at St. Paul on January 9, 1944. The conference merging the two churches was held on January 12, 1944, and a building committee was appointed to carry out the plans for a new church building to serve the consolidated congregations of Naomi and St. Paul Churches.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH

The First Baptist Church was organized in 1879 and the building built was donated by the Randleman Manufacturing Co.

The first pastor serving the church was Rev. J. B. Richardson. There were eleven charter members, four of whom were: J. T. Bostic, C. M. Stout, E. C. Burgess and a Mrs. Stevenson.

In 1945 construction of a new church building was started under the pastorate of Rev. J. I. Memory. A new parsonage was erected on Forest Drive in 1961. The present membership (1962) is over 400, and Rev. Fred W. Reece is pastor.

RANDLEMAN FRIENDS MEETING

A small group of dedicated Christians organized the Randleman Friends Meeting in 1943. The first meetings were held in Lacy Ferguson's garage on Holder Road. A tract of land where the present Church now stands, on High Point Street, was purchased and Randleman Friends Meeting took on permanent importance in the Christian Life of the community.

Twenty charter members were received at Plainfield Friends Meeting in 1945 just one week before services were to be started in the new Church. The building, originally a block structure, has been brick veneered and stands today as a monument to those who made sacrifices that it should grow and serve the people in the community.

THE PLEASANT HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

The Independent Missionary Baptist Church was organized November 4, 1956 from a mission which had been started August 10 of that same year. The Reverend Guernsey LeRoy Harrelson was the organizer of this Church which is located on Worthville Street and has about 60 members.

THE RANDLEMAN LIONS CLUB

In April 1938 the Randleman Lions Club was sponsored by the Greensboro Lions Club. This twenty-two year old civic club was the first organization of a civic nature in Randleman.

The Lions Club has sponsored many projects of civic improvement and has aided many citizens in sight conservation and sight improvement which is an active program in Lions International.

THE ROTARY CLUB OF RANDLEMAN

The Rotary Club of Asheboro sponsored the organization of this civic club in Randleman and the charter was issued in June 1942. The Rotary Club of Randleman is one of 11,000 clubs making up Rotary international with clubs in (130) countries throughout the world.

Rotary is a world fellowship of business and professional executives who accept the ideal of services as the basis for happy business and community life.

THE RANDLEMAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

In August 1947, a group of Randleman business men applied for affiliation with the U. S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D. C., which was granted to the 65 charter members. The group was incorporated as a non-profit organization in January of 1948.

This group is non-partisan, non-sectional and non-sectarian and the by-laws state the organization is for the purpose of advancing the commercial, industrial and civic interests in Randleman and its trade area.

THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF RANDLEMAN

In December 1947, the Woman's Club of Greensboro sponsored the Woman's Club of Randleman. The object of the organization is to stimulate intellectual development, to promote unity and good fellowship among the women of Randleman, and to strengthen, by organization, individual efforts to further the social, civic and spiritual well being of the community.

The Woman's Club is a member of The North Carolina Federation of Woman's Clubs and the General Federation of Woman's Clubs.

RANDLEMAN BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB

This organization was charatered October 1, 1948 and is a member of the State and National Federation. The purpose of the Business and Professional Women's Club is to aid in all civic projects, cooperating with all civic groups in worthwhile projects of community betterment.

This group has shown particular interest and has contributed liberally toward the operation of the Randleman Library. The drapes were donated, books have been provided and assistance in a financial way helped provide the Librarian's salary.

SUNSET MILLS

The Sunset Mills was started as a full fashioned operation in 1949. Leland Smith is general manager in charge of the mill.

THE SCOTTISH BANK

The Scottish Bank was started March 14, 1939 as a consolidation of the Bank of Red Springs, the Bank of St. Pauls, and the Bank of Lumberton.

The stock of the Peoples Bank was purchased and merged into the Scottish Bank in December, 1954. John P. Stedman of Lumberton is the president. The Randleman branch is under the direction of Charles D. Lewis, cashier.

UNITED BRASS WORKS, INC.

This was a family organization started in New York City in 1910 by the Berkelhammer family. It has been operated for fifty years by the same family, now in the third generation.

This corporation moved to Randleman in 1958 and has expanded its operation, manufacturing brass valves and machine parts to the point of employing about fifty people. The operation is in the plant formerly occupied by Burlington Mills Hosiery Company.

RANDLEMAN, 1962

Randleman has an average year-round temperature of about 63° and relative humidity of 74% which would indicate that the city is favored with ideal weather conditions. The average rainfall is about 3.6 inches per month, and town is 735 feet above sea level. The City of Randleman owns and operates a State approved water and sewer system and serves its citizens with water at rates comparable to other cities in the Piedmont section. Electrical service is rendered direct to the consumer by the Duke Power Company, having an office and display room in Randleman. The North State Telephone Company operates the telephone system, all of which is automatic, including the dial system. The increase in the number of telephones in the Randleman area is typical of the growth of the city in recent years. Since 1941 the number of phones has increased over 2000%, from 70 to 1,500, and additional equipment installations will considerably increase the number of phones in the next twelve months. The business houses of Randleman are served by the Carolina and Northwestern Railroad. There are approximately eleven trucking lines serving Randleman for both intrastate and interstate hauling. The city is also served by the Queen City Bus Lines, which interchanges with all other major bus lines.

THE OLD BELL

The Union Factory was built in 1848.

In 1868 John B. Randleman (1827-1879) and John H. Ferree (1839-1898) bought the Union Factory and changed the name to Randleman Manufacturing Company.

It had been a policy of the mill to have a bell rung on the hour all night long. This indicated that the watchman was on the job and not asleep. At three o'clock, the bell rang three times and so on all night long from eight at night until four in the morning, when it rang for several minutes to wake up the employees who went to work at six o'clock.

The bell tower was located just east of where the present bell is located at the Commonwealth entrance, in a wooden structure. It is believed that the original bell was given to the Holiness Church by Mr. E. W. Freeze, Sr. and Mr. A. B. Beasley about 1935.

The inscription on the present bell reads as follows:

IN MEMORY OF
JOHN B. RANDLEMAN & JOHN H. FERREE
THE FOUNDERS OF THE
RANDLEMAN M'F'G. CO., RANDOLPH CO., N. C.

On the back of the bell it reads:

McSHANE BELL FOUNDRY
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TRADE MARK

1887

It is the opinion that the old mill burned about 1885 and was immediately rebuilt and that the present bell was purchased by John H. Ferree in 1887.

In later years (about 1913) the present boiler room and engine room was built and the bell was placed on the roof of that building where it stayed until about 1956. The only time the bell has been used in recent years was at the end of World War II, when the bell was rung for about an hour.

RANDLEMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Randleman Public Library was organized in 1941. Miss Claudia Fox served as Librarian until her retirement, Dec., 1956. Mrs. James Sink is now Librarian. The library owns 3,246 books, and carries another 2,500 on loan from the County Library and is a member of the State Inter-Library Loan System. It had a circulation during the years 1960-61 of over 20,000 books. The building and lot it occupies on the corner of W. Academy and Hillary Streets are owned by the library.

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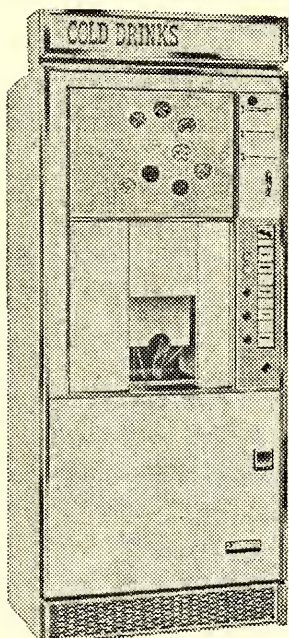
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